

Poetry of To-day

The Poetry Review New Verse Supplement

VOL. I, No. 6. NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1919

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500 Annual Postal Subscription, 3/6 ; with THE POETRY REVIEW, 9/6 net.

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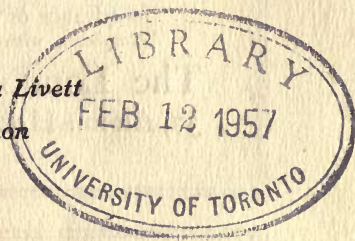
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CHRISTMAS IN LONDON

(NATIVITY PLAY, STEPNEY.)

IN London Town ;
About the Holy Time, when Christ comes down,
When many shrines are warmed that He may bide
In state, with tapers' shine, Who that first tide
Was laid upon a manger for a bed
And clothed and fed
By humble folk and strangers to renown ;
Deep in the city's heart, where, as of yore,
Christ still must beg His lodging from the poor
And still be housed in want on Christmas Day,
Down a mean street
An open door revealed a sight so sweet
My vagrant footsteps could not help but stay.
The city's children !—And set forth for them
The tale of that first Night in Bethlehem.

—A narrow room,
Chilly and bare,
Long since resigned to gloom ;
A row of dusty texts adorn its wall,
And weariness clings round it like a pall.
One conjures there
The apathetic figures of the poor
Distress brings shuffling to that dreary door ;
One sees it open with a furtive air. . . .
One hears it creak articulate despair. . . .
Beauty should faint in such a place—and yet,
See ! At the long room's end a stage is set,
Music sounds strangely in the gloom, and there,
Who seeks a sign,
May see the light of faint wax candles shine
Gold in the dimness, and discern the glory
On children's faces, of the Christmas Story—
The children of the poor, for whose respite
Christ came in poverty on Christmas Night—
Parted their lips, their cheeks are flushed and fair,
They see heaven's door ajar,
The Night Divine
Enfolds them, and behold, the Christmas Star

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Dawns as the curtain rises. . . .

Come with me.

And them, to greet the Lord's Nativity !
Ah ! feel the night, how bitter cold,
And touch the frankincense and gold,
And smell the strange scent of the myrrh
With musk combined and costly fur,
And watch the camels' cloudy breath
Dissolve in shapes of birth and death.

Hark ! You may hear, now all is still,
The sheep move softly on the hill ;
Beside the fold the shepherds lie
And watch the stars across the sky,
And sense behind their steady light
A hidden splendour in the night.

The darkness wanes, the Holy Feast
Draws nigh, the portent in the East
Burns dim, day glimmers where it shone,
The Shepherds and the Kings are gone,
To find—God, watching, must have smiled !—
A mother, and her Sleeping Child.

* * *

It is the waning of the Holy Tide,
Its fires burn low,
Cold grow the shrines, and faint the tapers' glow,
Fled, fled that Babe, and somewhere in the wide
Dim night, unsheltered from the winds forlorn,
There glimmers, like a fading star at morn,
An empty manger, left long, long ago.

Long, long ago !

It was not Bethlehem—
The curtain fell, and left an empty stage.
An ancient tale, a pious heritage
Is all men have to keep their hearts aglow
And shield them from the bitter winter's rage.
A tale, no more. My chill heart told me so,
And as I stepped into the sodden street,
Aching for loss of what had been so sweet,
A desolate voice within me seemed to say,

“Behold to-day!

All pasts are fled; though you glimpsed Bethlehem,
These are your streets, and you must walk in them;
There is no shrine that crumbles not away,
No dream but when men waken it must go.”

The London night
Had fallen, not clear but with a choking blight.
I felt like refuse among refuse tossed
Upon its sea. It seemed as if the lost
Emerged and vanished in its ebb and flow,
Cast to and fro,
Ghost meeting ghost in rings of misty light.
The spluttering white
Of the great arcs was dulled, and as I passed
From east to west, a gas lamp in the vast
Blind night, a gleam of hope engulfed by fate,
Made desolation doubly desolate.

Long rows of cheerless houses, standing stark,
Peered, like dull minds, into the clinging dark;
The sickly gleam of light above some door
Making the place more ghastly than before,
As though the whole were sentient, and were fain
The passer by should know it was in pain.
I quickened pace—
Horror was lurking in the commonplace;
A thousand streets, not differing one whit
From this, existed, and the thought of it
Was nausea. I could picture those who dwelt
In such a street: it was as though I felt
Their lives—a drab routine of joylessness,
Expressionless;
Compelled to live, perform a task, and die,
Not even asking, “Why?”

I raised my head,
And like some fabled monster, garlanded
To take his prey, beheld the London night
Beaded with little sparks of glimmering light,
The lines of lamps against the fog-bound sky.

Till, on the skirts of London, where its noise
Drops into silence, and the lonely voice

Of each man's footfall takes an echoing sound
That wanders through the endless streets around
And dies amidst their desert, life became
An empty name.

An empty name— In vain I strove to see
The vision that the night had reft from me,
Remembered with a pang all I had felt,
How I had knelt
Entranced in Bethlehem, and made the past
My own at last.
The past ! I said it. Suddenly the night
Flashed into glory : outwardly the same
It seemed to glow within, to shroud a flame
Hidden but lambent, held from mortal sight,
And suddenly the veil my eyes before
Was lifted, and I saw ;
And with exultant joy it came to me
“ Here ! Here and now, is Christ's Nativity !
For ever with us, never past, His birth
Makes all things new. A mystic heaven and earth
Are ours. For lo ! the dreary London dark
Is Mary's robe, and every glimmering spark
Of London's lamps, a jewel in her crown.
Christ still comes down
And still, without respect of where or when,
Is born eternal in the hearts of men.
Behold His manger ! 'Tis the street you tread,
Wretched enough, nay—foul, when all is said,
Without much faith, much hope—or much desire,
Yet, in the midst, with purity most dread,
The Holy Babe, burning in lucent fire ! ”

DOROTHEA LIVETT.

TO POVERTY

HOLY and most sweet Maid, much I deplore
That in thy service erst I chafed me sore,
Deemed I thy humble yoke unbearable
And thy plain livery unwearable.
O Tender Maid forgive !
I would thy lover live.

Thy hand so fair brought to my lips plain fare
Which to my jaded palate seemed despair,
Thou bad'st my feet my willing bearers be
The while I hated those that rode by me.
O Spartan Maid, thy road
Lies where God's light has flowed.

Sweeter than Perfumes blow the winds at morn,
Radiant as Opals flush the clouds at dawn.
Who spurn my Maid go lagging in sad toil
After mad wealth to gather unclean spoil.
O Follow my fair Maid,
Cleanly and unafraid.

The sweat of toilers smears the gorgeous feast,
Behind Fed-ease lies crouchingly the Beast.
Worms spin the silken robe, thy linen gown
Spangled with dew, smells of the grass new-mown.
O Simple Maid, thy ways
Robins and Linnets praise.

Wealth staggers by, flogged on by cravings fierce,
My Maid steps free, no emulations pierce
Her mirthful soul, all sour Envy flees
There's nought can disappoint a heart at ease.
O in return be fleet,
My Peace with thee shall meet.

Return, most Holy Maid, to me return,
For thine untainted fellowship I burn ;
Thine honest speech, thy brave unclouded eyes,
Thy feet on earth, thy spirit in the skies
Thy love, O Maid, to sing,
Harebells and Cowslips ring.
O Simple Maid ! thy ways
Linnets and Robins praise.
The windings of thy road

Lie where God's light has flowed.
 Serene and Holy Maid,
 Cleanly and unafraid,
 With thee I mean to live
 If thou wilt me forgive.
 My Peace with thee shall meet,
 Let thy return be fleet
 O Bride of Heaven most sweet.
 All my chains fall from me
 Embraced by Poverty.

ARTHUR HOOD.

VIATICUM

WHO packed thy wallet, friend ?
 —One whose love shall never end.
 What therein was laid ?
 —He put in bread and wine, and stayed.
 What said he thereon ?
 —“ Wilt thou want more than these, when thou art gone ? ”

How didst thou answer him ?
 —I begged a candle, for my eyes were dim.

He bent on me his gaze,
 Clearer than a thousand days :
 “ Thou shalt need no light ”
 (Quoth he), “ by any day or night.”
 Then said I, my fear
 Was of the blackness, when no hand was near ;
 But he this word let fall :
 “ I shall not leave thee, when thou leavest all.”

And wilt thou take a staff ?
 —Of his cross he gave me half.
 What shall be thy dress ?
 —He clothed me, in emptiness.
 Dost thou need no book ?
 —His face is all whereon I need to look.
 Hast thou no map nor chart ?
 —I know my road : it leadeth to his heart.

F. L. GHEY.

STORM IN AUTUMN

THE winds are up, the winds are up, and chasing all thro'
Glostershire !
The trees they strain, like dogs at leash, 'neath rain-drops' spear.
The fruit drops fast. While thro' dark grasses, leafage blear,
The torrents leap down hillsides drear
In Glostershire.

The winds are up, the winds are up, and coursing over
Glostershire !
And phantom drifts of filmy grey are gliding near ;
And every storm-tossed branch and bough has dropped a tear
To haste the Severn's full career
Thro' Glostershire.

The winds are up, the winds are up, and roaring on thro'
Glostershire !
With them my heart exultant soars, repelling fear,
Triumphant over doubt and care—delusions mere,
Pursuing visions faint—but dear
Beyond all here.

EDITH CADMORE.

A BALLAD OF 1916

I MADE a garden for my love
With roses white and roses red,
But I must gather rosemary
Since my true love lies dead.

I planned to plunder all the stars
To make a chaplet for his head ;
The rain beats on the window bars
And my love lieth dead.

I meant to make a dream of days
With life by love and laughter led ;
I stumble over stony ways
And my love lieth dead.

I made a garden for my love
With roses white and roses red,
And I must gather rosemary
For my true love lies dead.

M. W. CANNON.

THE DRYAD

FAR in a forest wandered a dryad,
Fickle and free as the wind and the dew,
Born of Earth, with the faun and the naiad,
Cradled in bowers of briar and yew.

Wild she roamed, in leaf-sewn kirtle,
Garland of ivy and girdle of vine,
Waked by the lark and lulled by the turtle,
Sinking to sleep 'neath an eglantine.

A thing of the woods, with far-blown tresses,
Lone in the wild, utterly free,
Lingering deep in leafy recesses,
One with the soul of flower and tree.

Dancing along through glades and hollows,
Swift as the breezes, lovely as Spring,
Singing the songs she heard from the swallows—
A vision of joy, a rapturous thing!

When the winter days were past and over,
The forest woke at the ancient spell,
To a paradise of mate and lover,
A myriad life in grove and dell.

O! the morning laughed, and life was merry,
When the early buds began to push,
And the blossom burst on the wild cherry,
And the leaves grew green on branch and bush!

Mother Earth laboured with shoot and sapling,
And dew-drops hung on her brow like gems,
And creepers flung in a riot, grappling
The aspen bough to the bramble stems.

Violets grew 'neath the birch and laurel,
With the yellow primrose, cowering low,
Hyacinths blue, and the star-white sorrel,
Sprinkling the sward with its petals of snow.

Grasses waved in the open stretches,
And the honeysuckle kissed the may,
And a clinging trail of purple vetches
Clambered over the dog-rose spray.

The dryad, safe in her tangled bowers,
Aloof from sorrow and mortal pain,
Laughed with glee at the silver showers,
The moan of wind and the sigh of the rain.

The wild things knew her—she held dominion,
And the forest-folk obeyed her law:
Borne aloft on a wind-swept pinion,
Burrowing deep with stealthy paw.

A stream meandered o'er rock and pebble,
From a mossy spring in a hollow cool,
Tumbling along in an eager treble,
Till it fell in spray to a rush-bound pool.

The noon-day heat went up in vapours,
And the evening west was of crimson dye,
And the shooting-stars, like flaring tapers,
Tore paths of gold down the midnight sky.

Deep was the song of the forest in summer:
(Pleasure pervading perpetual strife!)
Each little piper and quivering hummer
Adding its note to the chorus of life.

Life, ever life, for a moment, an æon!
Life in the atom and life in the sun!
Nature throbbed to her own glad pæan,
Pulsing with rapture to know herself one.

When the green had changed to gold and umber,
And the withered leaves began to fall,
The forest bowed its head in slumber,
And a silence brooded over all.

The glory passed, from the yellow bracken,
The leaves lay to die on the Mother's lap,
When the throbbing strings began to slacken,
And the frost congealed the flowing sap.

THE POETRY REVIEW

Fallen russet, and gold of beeches,
 Where the brown nut split from its hairy husk;
 Dance of death in the silent reaches,
 When a wailing wind arose at dusk.

The forest froze in the grasp of winter,
 With dun, dim mist for a hazy cloak;
 There was never a sound but snap and splinter
 Of dead twigs torn from the leafless oak.

The winter through, like a buried jewel,
 The dryad slept in a hollowed elm,
 Till the first faint sigh of Spring's renewal
 Waked her anew to her forest realm.

Before the olden gods went under;
 (As all may read in the ancient lore),
 A being apart, a thing of wonder,
 The dryad dwelt in the days of yore.

.

And she wanders still in the wood's wild places,
 Through the hoary trees, alone and fleet,
 Where silence fills the forest spaces,
 And shadows stir to her dancing feet.

In the spring of the year, the time of blossom,
 When life runs riot in copse and dene,
 You may catch the hint of a snowy bosom,
 Or a shoulder slid from her garment green.

You may find her caught in a brushwood tangle;
 You may hear her laugh from a brake of thorn;
 Glancing out where the dew-drops spangle
 Her drooping hair with the tears of morn.

She lingers yet in the forest vernal,
 Where a whisper breathes from the Long Ago,
 To fling the glamour of Youth Eternal,
 On feet that follow, on hearts that know!

MARGUERITE CURLE.

Poetry of To-day:

The Poetry Review New Verse Supplement

1919

LONDON :
ERSKINE MACDONALD, LTD.
MALORY HOUSE, FEATHERSTONE BUILDINGS,
W.C.1.

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THE MEANING

To those who only read poetry for a "message" or a "philosophy of Life."

Seek for such things where they abound,
In dusty tomes, none here are found
Saving the meaning of the ground

Which holds the legend of the rose,
The silver lore of rains and snows,
Man's prologue and his drama's close!

The meaning of the lonely sod
Where some see but a space untrod
And others footprints of a god!

The meaning which strikes lovers dumb
When through the world's harsh waters come
The ravelled sails of Actium!

IRENE HAY.

THE WEeping MAGDALENE

ON Jerusalem Highway
Mary ; Death's thrall, kneels to pray.

She is weeping ; and her sin
Never more shall enter in
The sweet chamber of her breast
By the Lord of Life possess.

Tinct with frankincense and myrrh
Are the fragrant tears of her.

She is weeping ; and her sighs
Ope the gates of Paradise.
Paradise, whose mystic keys
Are to Churches, blasphemies.

Tinct with frankincense and myrrh
Are the fragrant tears of her.

And the red-gold of her hair
All the flames of Love declare.
Love for Christ, the Great White Soul
Who of Death hath taken toll.

Tinct with frankincense and myrrh
Are the fragrant tears of her.

List ; the temple Pharisee
Scorneth Mary's bended knee.
" Woman ; never more shall rise
He who on Golgotha lies."

Tinct with frankincense and myrrh
Are the fragrant tears of her.

ERNEST F. SEYMOUR.

SONG OF THE PROW-GILDERS

(From the French of Victor Hugo, 1802-1885).

WE are the gilders of the prows.
The whirl-winds the smooth sea arouse,
Spun onward like a turning wheel ;
They fill the hollows of the deep
With shining spume and therein sweep
The galleys on a slanting keel.

The squall whips round, the sly winds veer ;
Loud the dark Archer, sounding clear,
Holds the dread trumpet to his lips.
Mid this bewilderment 'tis we,
Though the wroth waves lurch giddily,
Send forth, gold-helmed, the spectre ships.

For spectre-like their golden helms
Thrust thro' the flood and wind that whelms ;
Proud from our slips they take the sea,
A dauntless mark for lightning's lance
And a stern, terror-striking glance
To perils lurking stealthily.

Under the cooling leafage go ;
Keep shut thy full seraglio ;
Let not the veils down fall, O Sire,
From that strange throng that yestermorn
Stark naked to the mart were borne
For barter to the highest buyer.

What matters that to wind or wave,
A fair slave or a dusky slave,
From Alep or from Ispahan ?
From thee alike all shrink away.
How would'st thou then that that should sway
The wild and wondrous ocean ?

Each sates and spends his royal whim ;
The sceptre's thine ; the storms to him
And lightning ; each hath blades to smite ;
Thou hast thy scimitar, and he
His wrath ; as of the wind the sea,
Men murmur at the Sultan's might.

We toil for ocean and for king.
 Loud at our two-fold task we sing !
 O swarthy Lord of high renown,
 Thy stony heart, thy steely eye
 Shall not to drowsy birds deny
 Their slumber time when dusk comes down.

For Nature holds eternal sway
 Nor falters ; God's spread wing's alway
 A shield whereunder all may hide ;
 We sing within the stilly shade
 Blithe songs that rise all unafraid
 Of black reefs hid beneath the tide.

Let these our masters bear the palm,
 Be crowned with laurel ; we are calm
 So that they leave for us aloof
 The myriad stars, so clouds still fly
 On their swift courses steadily
 Unheeding any man's behoof.

June shines, and flow'r on flow'r unfurls ;
 The rose buds on white-breasted girls ;
 There's sport and mirth ; the craftsmen sing.
 Ah ! then is penance hard to dree,
 And the shy fawns light-footed flee
 And set the leashed hounds quivering.

O Sultan though thy life be spent
 Lapped round with soothest ravishment,
 Yet shalt thou die, and be no more.
 Then live and reign—for life is sweet.
 The fallow deer with folded feet
 Lie dreaming on the forest floor.

The mounted stairway leads thee back
 To lowly earth ; bright fires turn black ;
 The grave cries " Lo ! " to humankind.
 Time's changing moons unplume the bird ;
 The slow resurgent tides are stirred
 And dying voices freight the wind ;

The air is warm ; bare women dive
 Into the pool ; buds sunward strive
 In heedless throngs ; all's mirth and love.
 White lustre shimmers on the mere ;
 The woodland roses upward peer,
 Self-mirrored in the stars above.

Thy galley we have gilded bright.
 Four hundred shackled rowers smite
 Out from the port the insurgent waves.
 She curbs the wind, she climbs the tide ;
 On either hand the rowlocks slide
 Beneath thy groaning galley-slaves.

WILFRID THORLEY.

THE MOSAIC

WRITTEN AFTER THE SIGNING OF PEACE

THE Master Craftsman, throned in highest heaven
 Conceived a harmony sublime. Before Him rose
 A perfect plan, that stretched in majesty
 On thro' the ages. He arose and called
 Not angels nor archangels to His aid,
 But set His choice on man, and sent man forth
 To be His workman on this human earth.

* * *

Humanity is God's Mosaic, and
 Each life one fragment of the mighty whole ;
 One little fragment, 'mong a myriad more,
 Yet, were one missing, then the harmony
 Of God's Design were broken, and His Plan
 Irrevocably marred !

And oh ! for shame,
 To think how often, since this world began,
 Has man, in wayward wilfulness, destroyed
 God's wondrous Harmony and spoiled His Plan.
 For lo ! our lives are little, narrow, mean,
 And, where the fragments should have fitted close,
 Gapes a great yawning gap !

Perchance we dwell
 Careless and all indifferent, and our lives,
 Lived all haphazard, break the lovely lines
 That God laid down for us !

Or, sadder still,
 We live for self alone, and seek to grasp
 More than our portion. So the little gleam
 God meant our lives to be, becomes a glare,
 Crude, harsh, unlovely, dimming all the light
 That should have glowed in blended radiance
 To please the Master Craftsman !

And alas !
 Sometimes across the fair Mosaic streams
 An awful hue, blood red, and myriad lives
 Are scattered, broken, crushed, whilst, in the heavens,
 The angels hide their faces, shuddering,
 When man hates man and works his brother's doom,
 Shattering God's Plan with mad and ruthless hand !

* * *

But God picks up the fragments, and once more
 With patience infinite, He seeks to train
 His wayward children into nobler paths,
 His wayward children, whom He fain would save
 From their own reckless selves, on whom He pours
 So deep, so wide, so measureless a Love !

MARJORIE CROWTHER.

A PASSING

A WHIRLING of dead leaves,
 A gathering in of sheaves,
 The stripping of the trees,
 The ebbing of the seas,
 The shifting of the sands,
 A vision of fair lands . . .
 A sundering and a thundering
 Of prison bars that fall !
 The answer to a call
 New destiny to shape,
 A silence . . . and a breath . . .
 We call it—*Death* !
 Nor dare to say—Escape !

A. CHRISTIE.

THE INDEFINABLE

PREMIUM AWARDS AND CRITICISM

MANY an able writer has defined—or attempted to define—poetry. The best-known definition is, perhaps, that reached by Matthew Arnold: "Poetry is the best words in the best order"—but here is room for an objection. A perfect choice of words and metre can produce what is merely a metrical composition: that which constitutes true poetry is indefinable.

Poetry possesses a certain elusive quality, call it what you will—charm, magic, some visionary gleam from another world—that transmutes the base metal of words into pure gold.

Few there are, alas! who catch this fleeting glimpse of the infinite! But the less-favoured many strain and grope after they know not what, till by patient labour they succeed in mastering the technique of their art. Mere rhymers are they, and, for the sake of themselves and others, far better would it be for them to cease their efforts, and wait for that which they seek. For it comes unsought.

Wordsworth gained immortality, not through those verses written to carry out a theory of diction, but in poems where we see reflected that "light that never was on sea or land," where we feel eternity in "old, unhappy, far-off things." Such glimpses are not granted to all alike. To many they are but rare and momentary, and known as "inspiration." But one truly inspired thought, enshrined in a few lines, is worth tomes of faultless verse where there has been no gleam.

It is remarkable that the thoughts of children find expression in language which their elders, after years of laborious striving, could never utter.

Among those who entered for the Premium Award are two, sharers of the second guinea, who are very young, yet they have a claim to the title of poet, for they are among the pathetically small number whose work possesses the indefinable quality. Vivienne Dayrell (15), in her exquisite fancy, *Telegraph Music*, and in the poem, *The Wax Flowers*, remarkable in idea for so young a writer, combines wonderful originality of thought with a mature beauty of expression which is marvellous. Michael Franklin's poem, *The Scarecrow*, merits a place beside the above. Here the young poet shows wisdom beyond his years in choice of simple theme and metre. The poem has great charm.

These three pieces of verse, together with the Premium Award

poem, are a welcome relief from the disappointment of the other entries.

A. M. Christie's *Song of Columbine Wedded to Pierrot* bears the delicate touch of the born artist and expresses a depth of pathos which wrings the heart, yet shows no tendency to sentimentality. The writer has that rare power of opening up long vistas into the past, giving a sense of infinitude.

The third guinea is divided between (1) Nina Tee, whose ballad, with its haunting refrain, shows all the simplicity and restraint of the old ballad-poetry; (2) Una Malleson, for her sweetly flowing *Fantasy* and her graver but beautiful *Hidden City*; and (3) Edna Kahla (17), whose *Child Dream* shows great promise, her felicity of expression being especially remarkable.

Other poems worthy of mention are:—*In the Firwood* (Cyril G. Taylor), *The Weaver* (Charmian M. Weston), *Earth's Call* (Constance Berkeley Margetts), *The Actor* (Doris Westwood).

Bianca: Your theme, *Disillusionment*, is treated in an original manner, but there is a slight ambiguity in the last verse. *Sails* is less mature, even crude in parts, and the language is not poetic, e.g., "Unrivalled when it freezes."

Adonais: *Honister* is a good attempt at giving dramatic force to a flight of imagination. You should make it clearer that "their towering height," etc., refers to the giants. *Domine quo Vadis?* is a well-constructed, dignified poem written in appropriate metre.

Nemo: You are too ambitious in *Germania Prostrata*. Aim at simplicity, as only Miltonic genius can sing in Miltonic strain. As a sonnet the poem is correct; but "I wis" is artificial and too obviously inserted for the sake of rhyme. *The Return* is slightly better, but lacks ease. The expression, "somewhat dim," scarcely reaches the level of the rest of the poem.

Silvester: *An Echo of the Night* begins well, but lapses into harshness, as in the last line of the first verse. The rhythm of the last line but one is a little hurried. *Reunion* is more poetical, but the thought expressed lacks originality.

Bingo: *The Joy of Spring* shows a keen appreciation of Nature. Your choice of metre and the large number of syllables inserted produce a jingling effect which is not pleasing. Your work suffers from inattention to details: the repetition of "gurgling," hardly a pleasant word, especially when applied to "stream"; the use of a split infinitive (verse 3, line 3); the occurrence of the word "lolloped" in a non-humorous poem, and of certain irregularities of metre in the last verse.

Tyro : Your longer poem is slight and lacking in originality. Such lines as :—

“ . . . and idle breezes steal

From rustling reeds with tender, amorous sigh,”

show promise of greater lyrical efforts. *Illusion* is too compressed. Remember that clarity is essential to epigram.

Cæcias : The idea expressed in *The Poet Upbraids His Love* is good, but you should beware of choosing *vers libre* unless you can avoid clumsiness. The last lines are far better than the rest of the poem. *At the Gate* expresses a noble thought, but suffers from unevenness in the metre.

E. M. F. : Your poem, *The Sacrifice*, has for its source a striking idea, but the handling of your theme is crude and immature. *The Phantom Drake* also is original, but a more pleasing poem. Your ideas are interesting, and you should persevere.

G. A. C. : Your metaphor is a good one, but the first verse is not absolutely clear, and the language in verse 3 is commonplace.

Philomena : You have the true lyrical sense. *A Child-Dream* is a most creditable achievement, and its place in the Awards should encourage you to further efforts. The four opening lines are of real beauty, but this excellence is not sustained throughout. Yet many of your expressions are spontaneously poetical, and you have succeeded in creating an impression of drowsiness.

Burrage : You have caught the old ballad-feeling excellently, and the tragic note is deepened by the haunting refrain : “ Are those reeds or swords by the lake ? ” *The Strand* is a dainty poem of no great depth of feeling, and far below the standard of the preceding.

Charmian : You have succeeded in creating a pleasant colour-picture. *The Weaver* is a poem of merit, both as regards form and expression, and the idea is original. In *Ave Eve* the thought is not clear and the metre often irregular. Also “ cypress ” does not rhyme with “ sadness.”

C. E. B. : *Earth's Call* is a pleasant, smoothly flowing poem, but not very original in expression. The same criticism holds good for *The Tribute*, which does not seem to reach great depth of feeling.

D. G. W. : Your initials are being used as you gave no pen-name. *The Actor* is a vigorous poem on no ordinary subject. Some expressions are a little artificial : “ Appreciation thunders on the air.” And why is the audience “ cadaverous ” ? “ Russia ” shows a tendency to bombast, which is always the danger when the theme is historical or political. Such subjects need a master-hand to ensure success.

Veritate : The incident in *Ingratitude is the World's Reward* is

clearly described, but the last two lines make too harsh an anticlimax, being colloquial in style.

Sunny Jim : (1) is a promising poem with some happy turns of expression. You should pay more attention to metre. (2) is far too ambitious and bombastic. Aim at simplicity and avoid such a subject as you have chosen.

Vates : The symbolistic ideas expressed in *Flowers of Light* are remarkable considering your age. You have true poetic instinct, but be careful not to go out of your depth. Aim at clearness of thought. *Ad Astra* is a finer poem, and the first two verses are quite excellent. Take care of your metre, and beware of obscurity when in the realms of the insubstantial.

E. C. L. : Both your poems are pleasing but light in tone. Aim at greater originality.

Gypsy : *The Call of the Blood* is a time-worn theme handled in a pleasant, simple manner. "Remembrance came back with a start" is a harsh phrase. Your other poem possesses movement and an open-air feeling, but the last two lines of the fourth verse are clumsy.

K. : *The Unknown* is correct in form and expression, but lacks force and vitality. In *Meditation* the choice of metre produces a heavy, monotonous effect. The idea is good.

Lt.-Col. : *Young Morning* is a fine poem, great in conception and expressed in melodious diction, but it lacks something which your *Song of Columbine* possesses.

Stanley : Your poem on *Night* is too sing-song to be truly beautiful, yet it has some good lines :

"Fringed with the silver stars serene
And girded with sweet sleep."

Fairyland is better, indeed quite a charming little poem, but contains some faulty rhymes : "tender" and "sent her," and "echoes" and "meadows."

Catherine Clay : *Rest in Life* is promising, though not original in thought or expression. *The Poet* shows far greater depth of thought.

Karl — : *To Hester* is a creditable poem, serious in thought. "Imprisoned only by the winds we stand" is a good opening. *A Pilot's Song* is a daring attempt, and has a good swing. The similes are well carried out.

Lob : The poem *To* — is a little too prosaic, a characteristic accentuated by the use of blank verse. The last verse is on a much

higher plane. *Bed-Ridden* shows deep feeling and a certain poetic instinct.

Grace : In *Spring in Kerry* sharp contrast is well shown by the lines in parenthesis. *Casualty Lists* embodies deep sentiment, but possesses the dignity of restraint.

Diana : The style of *The Red Cross Hospital*—a poem on a novel subject—is easy and colloquial, and only occasionally becomes poetical. *The Patriots* shows more care in composition, but the theme is one too often handled.

W. Tasker : You have imaginative power of creating atmosphere, and in your swinging rhythm the spirit of the *Mountain Wind* can be felt. Your description of the west wind is felicitous : “the plighted lover of the rain.” Your second poem is less forceful, but again an atmosphere is created.

Brice : *Home of My Desire* is a dainty poem with a distinct lyric quality. But “vanish” and “wish” is a faulty rhyme, as also is “mystery” and “dreamily” in *An Autumn Morning*. The latter is well composed, especially the last verse.

Aconite : The ideas in both your poems are good, and there is depth of thought. But you express them in a form which tends to bombast, always a danger when one employs personification. Beware of such words as “amethystine.” Colour can be expressed in simpler words.

Arrowhead : *All Fools' Day* is a quaint poem, opening well, but becoming obscure and laboured. *Affection's Artless Offspring* is reminiscent of the metaphysical school of poets. Your metaphor is well sustained, and “To wait the kindly weather of your will” is an apt phrase.

Cuchullin : *A Song of the Old Gods* is a strong poem with a martial strain, but the first verse is the best. The theme is original.

Svengali : Your poems are of strange conception. In *The Lady Evangelist* the sequence of thought in the last verse is not clear. *L'Indifférent* is not pleasing. The use of the word “blasé” in English poetry should be avoided, as also the tag “and all.” You should try your hand at simpler themes.

Wilfrid Kemble : Both poems are worthy of praise, though neither is strikingly good. In *Whither Shall I Go from Thy Spirit?* the mention of the “telescopic lens” is not in keeping with the remainder of the poem.

Seeker : *The Wayfarer* shows deep sympathy with Nature. “Shadow-haunted pools” are words of a true poet, so persevere.

In the *Night-Ride* you have caught the feeling of swift movement, and you are skilful in producing effects of light and shade.

Jacqueline : *Telepathy* is a charming idea expressed in a carefully constructed poem. *The Soul-Carriers* is the expression of another original idea. In parts it is childish, and the metre is often irregular ; in the second line " little " is superfluous. Yet there are lines of poetical promise.

Diffident : *The Hunchback* is a poem of merit, expressing a perplexing problem in language of great purity. The succession of metaphors is striking and capably managed. *La Donna Mia* is a successful love-poem of great sweetness.

Billy : Both your poems seem to be child-poems, dainty, but of no very deep feeling. Perhaps this type of poem is your province ; if so, it is worth perfecting.

The Tramp : A poem such as your *Song of the Tramp* is not improved by the introduction of religious thought. Take care of your metre, as you have several superfluous syllables. *Perpetual Motion* is a better poem than the preceding as regards metre and diction. Beware of becoming prosaic.

The Premium Editor is greatly gratified and encouraged by the notes of appreciation received from contributors, of which a Sheffield lady's message is typical and a proof of the earnest fulfilment of our programme : " The REVIEW is a great help to me, and I do indeed appreciate its high tone and fine ideals, both for life and poetry."



RULES OF ENTRY FOR THE PREMIUM AWARD AND CRITICISM.

1. Poems submitted may be in any metre, but must not exceed 40 lines.
2. Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.
3. Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached thereto.
4. Non-subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW must enclose the imprint (beginning " Printed by ") from the last page of the cover of the current number.
5. If criticism is desired, a pen-name must be taken and 2s. 6d. enclosed.
6. Entries must be either type-written or written in ink on one side of the paper only.

We cannot undertake to return entries in any case. Poems should be addressed to " The Premium Editor " and should reach this office *not later than* November 30th.

THE ORCHID HUNTER

THE prize is won ! Here ends the quest !
—Here where I found this orchid's crest,
—Two humming-birds had built their nest
Enmeshed in its design.
The search is past. This tropic grove,
Liana-girt, below, above,
Long hid its blossoms rosy-mauve,
From eyes less keen than mine.

Unique it hangs and wreathes its grace,
Its fairy frills about my face,
The wonder of its jewelled lace
Has veiled me where I stand.
An amber moth is poised to sip,
A-swing upon its fringed tip,
The purple-crimson of its lip
Salutes my yellow hand.

Hot trembling hand ! Torrential rains
Have sent a fever through my veins,
. . . Why do I brood on Berkshire lanes
And evening skies of peach ?
Of lilies thick in cool grey moats,
Of Old Tom Tower's hundred notes,
And rattle of the College boats
Along the Ifley reach ?

From gold-spiked branch the parrot screams,
Rare creepers trail their gay racemes,
Above the waveless bronzen streams
The palm-fans idly stir.
And suddenly, pellucid-clear,
Forgotten organ tones I hear,
They call as in a far-off year
To prayer in Exeter.

The fever mounts ; I scarcely see
The toucan flash from tree to tree,
—A dearer vision comes to me
Of woods in England's Spring ;
With sweet soft sound of sighing trees,
And bluebells shaking in the breeze,
. . . And high above the quivering seas
I hear a throstle sing ! DESÉMEA WILSON.

POETRY OF TO-DAY

A LIST OF THE LATEST VOLUMES

TITLE.	AUTHOR.	PUBLISHER.	PRICE. s. d.
<i>Edward Wyndham Tennant</i> ...	Pamela Glenconner ...	John Lane ...	21 0
<i>The Measures of the Poets</i> ...	M. A. Bayfield ...	Cambridge U. Press ...	5 0
<i>The Super-human Antagonists</i>	Sir William Watson ...	Hodder & Stoughton ...	6 0
<i>Collected Poems</i> ...	Thomas Hardy ...	Macmillan ...	8 6
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